

UP STAIRS CLUB

Volume 3

May 6, 1960

Chicago, Illinois

An Educational Group

Hundreds of dancers have appeared on SC programs in the past - many of these dancers are now important stars, choreographers, teachers, dancers, actors and singers in various parts of the world, because of the school's policy of moving dancers on when they are ready. Many programs and ballets cannot be repeated because of the casting problem .. Those people who regret missing last season's "Like a Weeping Willow" performance should then be doubly cautious about missing this year's "In My Landscape" .. The CHICAGO BALLET COMPANY is now back home and the dancers are all busy at other work.. in leaving the city their first mishap was BILL MAONEY'S accident which brought MR.STONE back into the company, first for a period of 10 days at beginning of tour and again for 2½ weeks while the company was playing the larger cities in the east. MAONEY rejoined the company in Philadelphia and Mr.STONE left in Washington DC. Also early in the tour MEL SPINNEY was hospitalized with hepatitis; JOHN BARKER taking his place for a short time. Middle of March MR.STONE was hospitalized at Passavant. Had a long needed knee operation. Dr.Wm. Larmon was the orthopedic surgeon. At this point the operation is considered a success. Sometime in May he will resume teaching ... The New Year brought many changes about the school.. HILDUR NELSON left the school the end of February ending a long association with SC... The Rudolph Ganz school is responsible for the training of the two excellent pianists now playing .. the diminutive young lady with fingers that make you dance is ANDREA KUSHAR - of Spanish Descent ... she also plays for and studies Spanish dancing. ALSTON LAMBERT - a Panamanian - is a student of Molly Margolies.. On the May 15th program three pianists will share honors. MADELENE HARGADON will return to play "The Shooting of Dan McGrew", MADELENE was the pianist this dance was worked out with in the first place so it will regain its original flavor, NORMAN CURTIS, composer of "LIKE A WEEPING WILLOW" will play the Ravel "Valse Nobles et Sentimentales" loss of most of the cast of boys prevents a per-

formance of his ballet this year, LORA ABORN is the composer of this seasons original ballet "In My Landscape" and will be played by her, in the past LORA has been an important part of all SC programs, She composed MR. STONE'S ballet "Reunion" in 1950. Also for Mr. Stone she composed "Punch Drunk", "Long Corridor" and last season's "Strange New Street" danced by RUTH ANN KOESUN & JOHN KRIZA, in 1935 she wrote the well known "Ditties" for MR.CAMRYN followed by "Casey at the Bat" (choreographed by Stone) and "Hot Afternoons Have Been In Montana" in 1939 and "Boston John" in 1942; there is still another unperformed composition "Strawberry Roan" which may just turn up on a program one day. LORA ABORN attended Oberlin college and the American Conservatory where she studied composition .. She has written quantities of duo piano choral and voice music - and her tone poem "Ethan Frome" won a national award. One of the most entertaining afternoons Upstairs Club had this year was RUTH ANN KOESUN'S showing of her European slides. It is amazing how much of the world she brought us with her charming asides and stories. It was in a way a good-bye party for her and to make the day real special we had a champagne punch ... we are happy she is back with BT but we do miss her very much ...

JOHN KRIZA was a very happy addition to the Chicago Company and there are those who believe he was The Star he too is back in New York with BT DARRELL NOTARA now has a soloist contract with the company and his wife DIANE is a member of the corps ... CHARLES BENNETT recently became a member of the New York City Ballet Company JEAN KULAK KUDLA had her second child - a girl in February ... CAROL JURISIC has a baby boy ... DOROTHY SLESSMAN now Mrs. Jack Adams of Forest Hills, New York, wrote recently telling us "all about Eve" their fat bouncy girl, born October 8. VALRI INMAN and her new husband have a Fred Astaire franchise . in Phoenix Ariz. MR.CAMRYN flew west for the second time this year in January to attend his father's funeral .. the PATS-HEIM & CUMMINGS were about for a couple weeks from their world tour before depart-

ing for N.Y. to try their luck there. Early reports from BT's opening in N.Y. bring good news of RUTH ANN KOESUN'S reviews. It seems she has had consistently the best notices of any of the company. CHITA RIVERA has another success it appears in the musical "Bye Bye Birdie". It is a funny mixed up world when one reviewer can say "The funniest, most captivating, most expert musical comedy" and the next says "Neither fish, fowl, nor good musical comedy". Who do you believe? RICHARD MOHNHAUPT is one of the fortunate ones to go to Russia with "My Fair Lady". Our wonderfully gay PAT FERNANDEZ is not so joyous these days. Living in revolutionary Cuba with her husband does not present a very pretty picture. She will be home this summer. CAROL HOOVER who was responsible for the marvelous lights for our last season's performance will again return from N.Y. especially to light the new one. A preview of the concert was danced May 3rd in Oak Park for the Tea Cup Circle, Oak Park's oldest social group. It was the debut for the Ravel Waltz Suite. SC were proud of this beautiful group of girls who can also really dance. They were ANN BRADFORD, MARY LOU GODVIN, JOAN GREEN, POLLY HARDING, FRUMETH HIRSH, KAREN KRYCH, TONI KUTYNA, JOAN MANSFIELD, DEBORAH PODORE and JOAN GREEN, The divertissement section was danced by YVONNE BROWN, ASTRA BLAUMANIS, JAMES MORSKI, WM, MALONEY and WALTER CAMRYN, KELLY BROWN currently in "FROM A TO Z" in N.Y. recently turned down a 14 week engagement for a local night spot to open on the near north side sometime in August. SUE BROWN now works for Life Magazine in N.Y. RUTH PAGE and husband THOMAS HART FISHER left for Europe May 4th for an extended vacation. SHEILA REILLY and her staff JOSEPH KAMINSKI, WM, MALONEY and BARBARA STEELE are making plays for their summer at Interlochen.

Cast for "IN MY LANDSCAPE"

Story line based on Seven Ages of Man.
Musical score composed by Lora Aborn.
Words from Gertrude Stein's
"Lectures in America".

Narrated by John Neumeier.
Shadow Box designed by Robert Wolf.
Light designs by Carol Hoover
Choreography by Walter Camryn.
Artistic coordinator Bentley Stone.

"IN MY LANDSCAPE" - Continued

Note: Slow time in its infinity reveals in the light all things hidden and what is manifest it hides and there is nothing but what may come to be. Sophocles.

Cast of Characters:

Huw Walter Camryn

Images:

Bitterroot Polly Harding
(attachment to birthplace)

Owl's Clover Karen Krych
(intrinsic aesthetic nature)

Gentian Toni Kutyna
(hedonistic tendencies)

Sage James Morski
(ancestral strength)

Child with a sea shell . Dean Badoloto

Children . Debby Krych, Lauriel Parker

Franklin Bak

William Gatewood

Father John Neumeier

Mother Elizabeth Garriti

Her Friend Frumeth Hirsh

Girl with a Flower . . Lauriel Parker

Adolescent John Neumeier

School Boy James Morski

Fugue

Huw as himself Walter Camryn

His sensitive nature . . John Neumeier

His practical nature . . James Morski

Jazz in Three

Harding, Krych, Hirsh, Kutyna,
Neumeier and Morski

Blues Walter Camryn

Waltz and Tango Jane Bockman

Dirge

Society matrons Tamara Bascoff

Yvonne Brown

Carren Cheshier

Elizabeth Garriti

Frumeth Hirsh

Yolanda Salla

Reprise:

Return of the Images and the children
with Debby Krych representing hope
for the future.

The End

"Where are the Young Dancers"

By Bentley Stone

The words of the title for this article have been asked of me, as one of the heads of a well known school, by choreographers, managers and several of those unknown, but wondrously important people to ballet, the regisseurs. The answer to this question is one of complication. No one comment could tell the whole picture, but to see it more clearly, questioners might read two books on education: "The House of Intellect", by Jacques Barzun, or "The American Conscience", by Roger Burlingame. A quote from the latter would perhaps be in order to start me off; "We are prosperous. We are complacent. Religion has become for most a social convention.. Skill is anonymous, thought is under pressure to conform, security has replaced adventure as a dominant aim, intellect is in the discard and politics are dictated by ... mediocrity."

Reference to: we are prosperous, complacent, religious in word only, and desire security. These all follow obviously one from the other. The democratic idea is equality for everyone. But art demands the unequal. It demands passions which are not disclosed in the concepts of prosperous-ness, complacentness, security, or religious lip service. Religion demands passion. Dancing, or any art form demands the same. One great teacher of my acquaintance believes ballet to be the Yoga of the West. In other words, a discipline, self-imposed, which leads to the open illumination of the spirit both in performance and creation. Note I say creation and not creativity, which seems a shibboleth of modern educational methods. Passion for an art is not served then by the idea of togetherness (greatly favored), exchange of ideas (so stimulating, because each holds to his own), social adjustment, no work, and an equal role of mediocrity, which produces no elite.

The school offering instruction in art, dance or music then becomes one of the last shelters for the intellect. I use the word instruction rather than education with intent. Instruction supplies the tools for the intelligence at work. Without these tools what dreams may be expressed? The school of dance then instructs in all the lessons of movement discovered

through centuries. The student is not expected, nor could he rediscover all this for himself. He must be made to see and hear, both avenues of knowledge neglected in general education at the moment. Finally, to be a dancer, it is not his instructor's problem but his own. Given the tools, the rules of a discipline, he must adapt them to himself. Discipline is always a self-imposed course of action. Through this course, he will arrive at taste, based on his own knowledge. Taste to know where to reject, where to include, so his work of ideas in seclusion is made public from his point of view with depth to save the result from mere novelty. This would seem security of the only kind, which can neither be lost or changed except at the will of the author. Does the school of art, dance or music achieve the above result? Only half way, for the temper of the democracy, in school, church and home does not lead to the simple, honest and very dull work necessary to produce the passion of dedication that makes the mature artist. Perhaps this is why dancers whose work is subject to the passing of years still carry on, while younger ones do not come to take their place with the same fine edge of workmanship. This was reaffirmed to me in a letter about the recent reorganization of Ballet Theatre; the author suggesting the veterans were brilliant, with the new talents undeveloped.

I find none of this answers my lead question "Where are the young dancers?" Never, I should say, have studios all over the world been crowded by so many aspirants to the dance. The question as to why is interesting, in view of the limitation on a professional career. Ballet companies, rather I should say all dance companies, have hard sleighing at the moment. Unions of all kinds, including one for the dancers; travel costs, etc., prevent, except under extraordinary circumstances, any real creative effort on the part of the choreographers. The companies for the most part deal on repetitions of the classics and novelties for the season, relying more and more on the hope that they offer a good "show"; these shows being more and more on the level of Radio City, which does a better

job, for it stays at home. Each year the show provides more legs, more tricks, and the audience stays home. It is not for the reason of television, but the reluctance to make an audience work for their enjoyment.

I am not sure what happens in the mind of a seventeen year old girl or her parents. Security, I suppose. At all events the young dancer, female, of this age, after spending eight to nine years of hard work in dance, along with the attainment of a high school education, promptly goes on to the Universities and the colleges. Not primarily for education, it would seem, but for social adjustment and marriage, which course the majority promptly pursue. The parental attitude is not hard to understand ... a better life for my child and her future course in life secure. After a period of forty years more or less of war, it is nice to know one's girl child is safe with another human responsible for her welfare. So much for the girl: she is a Sleeping Beauty conditioned to movement who will never realize its possibilities. She will not have the touchstone of knowledge acquired in at least one field of endeavor, the pride and humility that could lead to judgment from the head and not the emotions. This kind of judgment from the head and not the emotions - the dance world desperately needs.

As for the boys in the dance world: it would seem to me, there are too many, illtrained, in search of vainglory, who receive employment because men are needed. Dance, or any other art form, should never be used as an extension of personality, or a feather in the cap. If this is done, the protagonist finds himself mentally on the limb, for he does not mature in his work, he just grows older. I do not think the male in the dance world, for his mental health, can just be a dancer. The dependence on choreographers, managers, publicity people, etc., then absorbs all his energies, which should be released for continual study and experiment. His soul then becomes dry as dust... he must play the pander

for friendship, affection, and advancement. No artist will develop from such a person. The boy must be made to realise it is not only dancing, but teaching, choreographing or even - for those who do not possess the physical talent - writing; which will give him avenues for escape from the professional dance world; thus the time and peace to work for the work's sake, and his pride of knowing he owns his own soul. "Be beholden to no one" comes to us straight from the pioneers. America is not Russia, where the dancer has position and financial protection till death. Here the dancer must make his position against a community of disinterest far greater for the male than the female. To do this the male dancer must be better than best; he must have the aspects and intelligence of an artist which brings depth to work and not the surface slickness of the performer. He must daily work at his instrument and see, see, see. It is one of the curious things about young dancers that they look little at their confreres, and when they do it is to criticize, usually on the basis that the others are not of their bailiwick; "Who Are All Those Others?" - a prevalent American idea among many specialized groups, but more prevalent among dancers. Those having it miss too much of the wonder and glory of movement, which interest could sustain them for the duration of their professional life.

Finally, the dearth of young dancers is not an isolated phenomenon. You will find any number of well-dressed young people in any business; intelligent, but without the drive of idea behind them. Ideas are dangerous, full of effort, and call for a creative force. Much better then, the middle, the mediocre, the safe; we bore ourselves through life for the pension, added benefits, with the government helping with social security. The French hid in security behind their Maginot Line for twenty years to see it fall and their country with it, but to find a reason for active life again through force and ideas. Perhaps the same will happen to our waste-paper jungle and we will have real originality and force of conviction again in all departments of life.

FROM A DANCER'S SCRAPBOOK

On Change:

One must change one's tactics every ten years if one wishes to maintain one's superiority. Napoleon I

Progress is impossible without change; and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.

George Bernard Shaw

Any very great and sudden change is death. Samuel Butler

Such is the state of life that none are happy but by the anticipation of change. The change itself is nothing; when we have made it, the next wish is to change again.

Samuel Johnson

We must always change, renew, rejuvenate ourselves; otherwise we harden.

Goethe

Wherever we are it is but a state on the way to somewhere else, and whatever we do, however well we do it, it is only a preparation to do something else that shall be different.

Robert Louis Stevenson

Our personality, which is being built up each instant with its accumulated experience, changes without ceasing. By changing, it prevents any state although superficially identical with another, from ever repeating it in its very depth. That is why our duration is irreversible.

Henri Bergson

What we do depends on what we are; but it is necessary to add also, that we are, to a certain extent, what we do, and that we are creating ourselves continually.

Henri Bergson

* * * * *

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE M.P.F.?

We've been asked this question every time we turn around. Here's the answer;

The fund is intact - but alas, still not enough for a one reel (ten minutes) sound-color production. The Motion

Picture Industry is costly. We have contacted various film producing companies and we were even unable to meet the lowest price stipulated for a questionable caliber of production.

However - don't despair. Messrs. Stone and Camryn have both expressed a desire that the school be provided with a 16mm sound projector and screen. Inasmuch as their long-range program will include many educational facets, this suggestion seemed very feasible and we are quite sure this will be satisfactory to all of our contributors.

ISADORA DUNCAN - 1878 - 1927

Once in each generation there appears a maverick in the art world. One who breaks every convention of society, living freely and coining their own set of rules. Often we are indebted to these mavericks for a new vision and a new set of ideas. We are then forced to discard old worn out conventions, setting forth a new spurt of creativity in the arts. Isadora Duncan was one of these mavericks, who in her time freed the dance from meaningless movement and gave it new heart and new life. We have again reached a sterile and mediocre period - hence the new interest in Duncan.

She was born in San Francisco California of Irish parentage. Her mother, a music teacher gave her a superior appreciation of music and from this, her feeling for motion in relation to music. As a child she did study ballet as it was taught in that day which probably was none too good and reason enough for any child to rebel against it - which she did. She began to express herself in dance in her original way. Without much formal education she was self educated to a remarkable degree.

In 1899 there was a debut, dancing in Chicago without success. After this she and her family went to Europe where she danced in Paris with more appreciation. This success brought engagements in other cities - Budapest - Berlin - Florence and other cities. In 1904 she established a school in Berlin and two years later did her first program with pupils from this school.

She at this time became clearer in her ideas and called her dance simply "free dance".

If we regard the dance as an independent art form, we must recall that in the late 19th Century it had arrived at a point of utter mechanization and complete hopelessness as to content matter. It was no longer a medium of revitalizing entertainment, but a mere exhibition of brilliantly trained bodies. Heart and essence of the dance experience was lost and the dance degenerated into a meaningless show. It lacked instinctive and absolute conviction. Only Duncan's appearance restored this lack of belief. All her interpretations carried a message for more freedom and all her movements revealed the glory of a full experience.

In 1905 Duncan made her first appearance in Russia which started long and heated discussions in the ballet world, which eventually brought about the reforms in ballet by the choreographer Michael Fokine. Fokine first used this influence in a ballet called "Eunice" with his dancers in Greek tunics and barefoot. This influence was to flower more fully in a later ballet "Les Sylphides" as we know it today.

The dancer's body, in its natural shape form, line and curves, is the very instrument for the expression of emotion. Isadora had an ideal body. Even if her technic was not superb, her motor skill was the result of intensive preparation and she was certainly one of the most able in projection to her audience whatever she wanted to express. She had discovered to her complete satisfaction that the solar plexus was the bodily habitation of the soul and the center in which inner impulse was translated into

movement. This search for motivation brought her to basic emotional laws considering joy, sorrow, devotion, and freedom in terms of pantomime.

Nature inspired her dance compositions, for "man's culture is the making use of forces connected with nature at its roots". More even than a philosopher, Isadora was able to install the meaning of all life and to strive for the ultimate expression of a people living in the fullest sense of the word. She studied Plato, Sophocles, and Euripides, but also received inspiration from Shakespeare and Whitman; through them her creative mind was spurred on to still higher aims.

Europe hailed Isadora; it hailed her honest and courageous attachment on the dance of the time, and it was not interested in her technic; but only with the message she conveyed.

Though the U.S. at first received her coldly, she returned to her mother country at various times in 1909, 1911, 1917 and 1922 - the last time was under the impresario Sol Hurok.

She prophesied that fifty years after her death a monument would be built for her. Less than thirty-two years have passed and the prophecy is already beginning to be fulfilled. The monument however, is not the conventional tribute in stone which she foresaw, but a body of living dance freely acknowledging her as its source.

Isadora Duncan died tragically near Nice, France, on September 14, 1927 as a result of a weird accident. The end of a long scarf which she was wearing around her neck while taking a trip in an open automobile got caught in the rear wheel of the car and strangled her.